



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Portland District

Celilo Village Redevelopment Newsletter

April 2008

A newsletter keeping you informed about upcoming meetings and providing updates as the Corps continues Celilo Village redevelopment.

Celilo Falls long served as a trade center, sacred fishing ground and gathering place for the Northwest Indian tribes. When The Dalles Dam was constructed, the falls were flooded. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provided a new location near the original falls, where about 50 people live in Celilo Village. Inadequate maintenance, as well as sanitary and water systems, caused public health and safety concerns to village residents.

To resolve these problems, the Tribes requested the Portland District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to rebuild the village under the Columbia River Treaty Fishing Access Sites Project. Congress authorized the reconstruction of the village in March 2004, and the Corps expects construction to be completed by 2009.

Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Visits Celilo Village

The Honorable Carl Artman, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, visited Celilo Village March 10. Corps project manager George Miller presented an overview of the project, emphasizing that the Corps has met its responsibility to redevelop the Village. He pointed out that the success of the project now lies with the BIA, tribal governments, Wy-Am board and residents. Miller stated that housing will be the responsibility of the BIA in June.

Jim Beard asked Artman if he could assist in putting the improvements at Celilo into the BIA inventory. This would be essential to assuring proper funding and care of the new buildings and infrastructure. After the meeting Artman toured the village, including one of the new housing units.

Artman, an enrolled member of the Wisconsin Oneida Tribe, carries out the Department of the Interior's trust responsibilities regarding management of tribal and individual Indian trust lands and assets. He promotes the self-determination and economic self-sufficiency of the nations American Indians and Alaska Native tribes.

BIA will assume responsibility for permanent housing in June

Colville Tribal Services Corp. will complete work on the new houses next month. In June, the Corps will move residents into their new homes. In July, CTSC will remove the temporary housing units and begin constructing the classroom-BIA office building. The classroom-BIA office will be completed by the end of this year.

Congress must appropriate funding for the landscaping, playground, and operations and maintenance in Fiscal Year 2009. This June, the BIA will accept responsibility for the new houses.



Asst. Sec. Artman tours the village with Corps project manager George Miller, right, Wy-Am board member Reuben Henry and Corps quality rep. Ed Saldana, left.

Upcoming events

- May 1: Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp, Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will visit Celilo Village
- May 23: ribbon cutting and redevelopment completion ceremony for the new Celilo Village homes

Wy-Am board

The Wy-Am board met March 27 at the Celilo long-house. The meeting's goal was to review the occupancy permit. A schedule for finalizing occupancy permits and obtaining residential signatures was handed out. Each of the 15 eligible residents must sign a residential occupancy permit by the end of May.

The BIA determined that the permits need to be completed before residents move to the new units in June. The Wy-Am board agreed to meet Thursday, April 10 with the three tribal councils' chairmen and superintendents of the three BIA agencies.

Reviewing Celilo Village: Tribes, Corps and Wy-Am Board create a new community

Rebuilding Celilo Village began with a request from the four treaty tribes' leaders: Umatilla, Warm Springs, Yakama and Nez Perce. Tribal leaders met with Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works Dr. Joseph Westphal and North-western Division Commander Brig. Gen. Carl Strock in April 2000 to discuss Celilo Village infrastructure concerns.

The Corps was already working on the Columbia River Treaty Fishing Access Site project to rebuild in-lieu sites and provide additional treaty fishing access sites. The sites would mitigate Bonneville Dam's impact on usual and accustomed fishing areas. Based on the tribes' request, the Corps' Portland District recommended studying Celilo Village redevelopment in conjunction with the Fishing Access Site project. The Corps' Washington D.C. headquarters supported the recommendation to conduct a study.

The Corps completed the study in consultation with affected tribes and all federal, state and local interests and the general public. The study recommended redevelopment of Celilo infrastructure and housing. Before the Corps could undertake this work, congressional authorization was required.

The Corps' headquarters approved the planning report February 2004. Tribal leaders were the key to obtaining necessary authorization; their pressure for political action brought results. On March 2, 2004, Celilo Village redevelopment was authorized by the Native American Technical Corrections Act.

The project began with the installation of the Wy-Am board, composed of appointed representatives from the Umatilla, Warm Springs, and Yakama tribes and elected village residents. The tribal governments and Wy-Am board have participated in monthly meetings and have advised the Corps on all aspects of redevelopment.

Tribal, resident and Wy-Am input was sought as the Corps developed cultural resource testing, a village design, plans and specifications for the utility systems and new homes; selected contractors and supervised them; constructed new infrastructure; purchased residents' private property and houses; demolished old structures; acquired temporary housing and relocated residents into them while 15 new homes were being built.

The Corps promised to redevelop Celilo Village and do it with quality. That job is almost done. Now the BIA, tribal governments, Wy-Am board, and Celilo residents are responsible for the viability of the community.

The future

Making the renewed village successful will require creating a self-governance organization and developing educational and economic opportunities.

The BIA, tribal governments, Wy-Am board and residents have begun work on governance codes and planning for law enforcement, operations and maintenance of the infrastructure, buildings, and grounds. Getting the BIA to add Celilo Village assets to its inventory will ensure O&M funds. The continued support of tribal governments and village residents will be needed.



Celilo Village near completion. The new longhouse is in the center. Fifteen new homes situated to the east and west. New water tower at right; new sewage lagoons at back. Roadbeds ready for paving. Temporary homes clustered behind the new homes.

Celilo Village Redevelopment Newsletter is published by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District, to keep residents and interested members of the public informed of Celilo Village redevelopment. Project Manager: George Miller
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